

The EPIC Program

New Leaders for New Schools established the Effective Practice Incentive Community (EPIC) in 2006 to link principal and teacher



incentive pay to the wide-scale sharing of effective educational practices. EPIC identifies educators who are driving student achievement gains and rewards them. The winning schools then share the practices that helped lead to the gains. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), school district and charter school partners and private philanthropic funders. The primary components of EPIC are:

- The development of value-added models to analyze student achievement data and identify schools making the greatest gains;
- The recognition and rewarding of school leaders and instructional staff in high-gain schools for participating in the process to identify, document and share their effective practices with other schools;
- The creation of comprehensive case studies that are shared with a broad network of schools through an innovative online platform called the [EPIC Knowledge System](#).

EPIC offers a unique approach to compensating school leaders and educators. While the EPIC model of incentive pay recognizes the importance of including student achievement data in evaluating schools, individuals are awarded monetary rewards after they agree to share the effective practices that contributed to improved student achievement. School leaders have higher awards in recognition of the significant amount of time they spend on the effective practice documentation process.

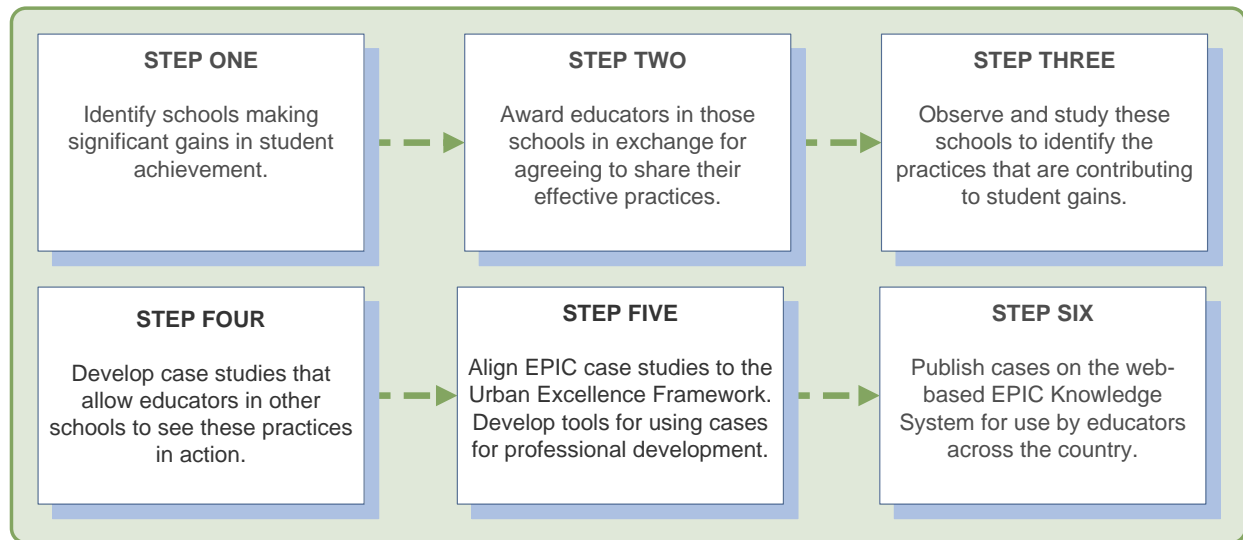
EPIC Program Partners

EPIC operates in the following school districts and partner schools: District of Columbia Public Schools, Memphis City Schools, Denver Public Schools, and the National Charter School Consortium, a group of over 140 charter schools nationwide committed to sharing the practices that help them drive student achievement.

EPIC is a partnership of some of the leading education organizations in the nation. Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) helps create and refine the value-added models used to determine EPIC awardees, along with providing evaluation services for the program. SchoolWorks leads the process of identifying effective practices in EPIC-recognized schools based on a collaboratively-developed and rigorous school visit protocol. VPG Media—a Boston-based media company with significant experience in documenting practices in K-12 schools—partners with New Leaders to acquire, develop and produce multimedia and video content that illustrates identified effective practices in action.

EPIC Effective Practice Work

New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) created the EPIC program as a way to research, identify, document, and share the practices that yield significant student achievement gains in high poverty, urban schools. Every step in the EPIC process supports the development of case studies and practice profiles created in partnership with award-winning schools:



Once schools are identified for a TEAM/EPIC award, the principal and leadership team works with the New Leaders' EPIC staff and our research partner SchoolWorks in a rigorous, analytical investigation to identify practices that the entire team determines have contributed to student achievement gains.

When a central effective practice is identified, NLNS and a team of case writers and producers work closely with the school's leadership team and teachers to document these practices. Ultimately, EPIC creates tools and resources that make the EPIC modules ready-to-use professional development for implementation by principals, coaches and teachers.

The EPIC Knowledge System

All DCPS staff can access the EPIC Knowledge System for free. [Click here](#) to sign-in if you are already registered. [Click here](#) to register for access.

The EPIC Knowledge System provides school leaders and coaches with tested tools and practical resources that they can use to strengthen their practice and improve their schools. EPIC's online professional development modules offer specific strategies, practices, and actions that school leaders, faculty, and staff from urban schools across the country have used to improve student achievement.

All EPIC case studies follow a common structure and outline and include demographic and student achievement data from the school. Some cases contain video, providing users with an up-close look at a school's practices in action, along with interviews of key educators in the school. Each case study includes a Facilitator's Guide with suggestions for workshops and activities developed around the content found in the case. Practice profiles are first-person narratives that also follow a common structure and include demographic and student achievement data from the school. Both case studies and practice profiles contain a rich set of school artifacts, the tools used by the school during their day-to-day work. School-produced documents are unedited, representing the actual work the school has done.

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